

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Integrated Regional Water Management Implementation Proposition 50, Chapter 8 IRWM Implementation Step 1

PIN: 6504
APPLICANT NAME: County of Orange
PROJECT TITLE: South Orange County IRWM Plan Implementation Project

FUNDS REQUESTED: \$ 50,000,000
COST MATCH: \$127,227,751
TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$177,227,751

DESCRIPTION: The region encompasses the San Juan Hydrologic Unit, included in the Water Board Region 9 boundaries, including a small portion of Region 8 jurisdiction. Collectively, the projects implement the seven objectives, which focus on water supply and water quality, identified by the IRWM Group members, including 13 cities, 12 special districts, and the County of Orange. The projects include seven water supply projects, four water conservation projects (including 2 Regional Action Projects), five aquatic ecosystems and watershed management projects, three water quality/pollution reduction projects (including one Regional Action Project), and one information management project. Each project is essential to maintaining the integrity of the Region's water supply and natural resources.

Question: Consistency with Minimum IRWM Standards - This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the IRWM Plan meets the minimum standards.

Pass

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Adopted IRWM Plan and Proof of Formal Adoption. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The South Orange County IRWM Plan was adopted by several local entities in 2005. Resolutions of adoption from the implementing agencies are included in the proposal. In addition, many partner agencies have adopted or support the plan and several agencies that have statutory authority over water management are also participating.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Description of Region. Weighting factor is 1. 4

Maps showing the region and its watersheds, regional water agencies and regional water systems and resources coupled with a narrative discussion provide a thorough representation of the region. They also describe DAC and EJ issues in the region. A map showing land-use activities would provide useful additional detail. Also, the discussion of important social and cultural values and economic trends needs to be expanded.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Objectives. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The proposal breaks objectives into seven key categories and all 11 water management strategies are considered in planning to achieve the objectives. This categorization and detail on why each objective is appropriate shows a significant level of regional organization and understanding of the individual agency issues that need to be addressed to reach the goals of the integrated plan. A discussion of the priority in which objectives could be addressed may also be useful for regional consideration.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Water Management Strategies and Integration. Weighting factor is 1. 4

The plan addresses 20 water management strategies. The plan discusses in thorough detail the integration of these strategies to meet each of its objectives. It addresses all issues in a positive solution oriented manner. The synergy created by integration of these strategies is discussed, but the mechanism for how it could be achieved is not detailed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Priorities and Schedule. Weighting factor is 1. 5

The proposal priorities appear to represent the best interests of the region suggesting the partners may be working well together. The proposal identifies regional priorities in terms of Priority A (projects to be completed through 2010) and Priority B projects (through 2030). Projects are identified by priority, water management strategy, implementing agency, and time schedules. The project timelines are considered flexible so Priority A Projects may be accelerated if needed and Priority B Projects may be constructed in advance of their original timeline. The IRWMP will be refined and amended about every five years.

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Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Implementation. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The plan identifies all projects to be implemented consistent with the objectives. It also includes a timeline and discussion of project administration, management, and roles and responsibilities. No feasibility analysis is provided. No clear links or coordination between implementation projects is identified. The status of projects for implementation is not readily apparent. The proposal includes a thorough discussion of technical feasibility but not economic feasibility.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Impacts and Regional Benefits. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The Plan does not include a sufficient evaluation of the potential negative impacts resulting from the implementation of the Plan elements. It is implied that negative impacts will be addressed on a project by project basis as each project goes through CEQA. This may not adequately address the effects of the regionally integrated program. The plan does provide a thorough discussion of social, water supply, and environmental benefits to the region. Advantages of a regional plan versus several local plans are only briefly mentioned.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Technical Analysis and Plan Performance. Weighting factor is 1.

3

Adequate documentation is provided for the scientific basis of each project and in some cases quantifiable targets for project performance are provided. There is little discussion of data that currently exists and data gaps are not identified. Project adaptability and evaluation of project performance and evaluation after implementation are not addressed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Data Management. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The proposal does not provide a complete discussion of data management. A system for data acquisition and sharing has not been established. Potential partnerships for information exchange are only mentioned and not fully developed. An assessment of existing monitoring efforts and how they can be integrated would enhance proposal effectiveness.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Financing. Weighting factor is 1.

3

The proposal identifies the potential sources of funding for the local share on "Priority A" projects. The details of financing for operation and maintenance of projects is not provided and beneficiaries of plan implementation are not discussed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Relation to Local Planning & Sustainability. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant will coordinate the IRWMP with local, regional, and statewide plans. They will also incorporate amendments into the IRWMP and identify coordination opportunities as new studies and plans are completed. The planned watershed advisory committee will also provide opportunities for local planning and project management. Sustainability of the IRWMP is also enhanced through the incorporation of existing plans where projects were previously identified and prioritized through other local efforts. Management strategies and dynamics between the various levels of planning are not thoroughly addressed.

Question: Consistency with IRWM Standards - Stakeholder Involvement & Coordination. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The applicant has made a comprehensive effort to involve and coordinate with stakeholders. Public scoping and planning meetings were held and opportunity for formal input was provided. Partnerships were also developed including at the state and federal level. Environmental justice issues are marginally addressed. Additional discussion of mechanisms and procedures for allowing exchange of information and for feedback to shape the course of plan implementation would have gained the proposal a higher score for this criterion.

Question: Funding Match. This evaluation will focus on whether the applicant has demonstrated the ability to meet the minimum funding match or has requested a waiver or reduction in the funding match.

Pass

Question: Description of Proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

12

The proposal includes a detailed description of all 20 proposed projects. The applicant effectively documents how the projects fit into the IRWMP. The connection is also made between the projects, objectives, and strategies that address the key water management elements applicable to statewide priorities for State Board, DWR, and CALFED programs. Environmental compliance will be handled on a project specific basis. More detail on how the environmental review requirements will be met is needed. The metrics to gauge the success of each project are described.

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Question: Project Prioritization. Weighting factor is 2.

10

The proposal provides the list of 20 prioritized projects that were identified, discussed, and categorized under the various IRWM Plan objectives.

Question: Cost Estimate. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The proposal includes a summary cost estimate for all 20 projects and a detailed break down for each project. The cost estimates are sufficiently detailed and appear reasonable. We note that the cost for the Canada Gobernadora Multipurpose Basin is three times that proposed for funding under Prop 13 in 2003. The scope of this project should be further analyzed if the applicant is invited back for Step 2.

Question: Schedule. Weighting factor is 1.

5

The schedule shows the sequence and timing of proposal implementation and each individual project. The relative timing and sequence appears reasonable.

Question: Need. Weighting factor is 2.

8

The proposal adequately demonstrates need by showing how water management in the past has not been regionally integrated creating increased reliance on imported water and lack of ability to address significant water quality issues. A discussion of the impacts that may occur if the projects that address these issues are not implemented is also included. While the environmental impacts that warrant the need for implementing the plan are described in detail, the economic and fiscal relationship needs elaboration. Details in the current water management systems would be useful in evaluating the need.

Question: Disadvantaged Communities. Weighting factor is 2.

4

The proposal does not demonstrate direct benefit to disadvantaged communities. It does indicate up to 25% of the region could be considered disadvantaged locally and would benefit along with the balance of the region would from implementation of the proposal. There is no specific description however, of where this disadvantaged group is within the region and how much they may benefit.

Question: Program Preferences. Weighting factor is 1.

4

The proposal demonstrates the projects are integrated and provide multiple benefits and address the program preferences listed in the Guidelines and evaluation criteria. Although there is a general discussion of disadvantaged communities in the region, no projects will be implemented specifically for the purpose of providing safe drinking water or water quality benefits for an identified and well defined disadvantaged community.

TOTAL SCORE: 94